



March 9, 2005

The Honorable Michael Castle
The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Castle and DeGette:

As a member of the Association of Independent Research Institutes (AIRI), I am writing to strongly support your legislation, H.R. 810, The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, which would expand federal support for human stem cell research.

I understand first-hand the promise held by human embryonic stem cell research. **This** research may make **it** possible for those Americans crippled by Parkinson's disease and spinal cord injuries, **as** well as those suffering from Alzheimer's and many **other** debilitating diseases, to significantly improve their quality of life. Promoting **the** exploration of reasonable possibilities for curing and preventing disease is the responsibility not only of scientists but of the leaders of the nation.

Thank you for **acknowledging** the promise of continued **medical** discovery that embryonic stem cell research can offer. Your thoughtful **legislation** not only **allows** for broader federal funding for stem cell research, but also takes the **appropriate steps to** ensure the development of ethical guidelines for the future derivation of embryonic stem cell lines.

I appreciate your **prominent** leadership and **your dedication to expanding stem cell** research, which holds the potential for **new cures and therapies** for an array of life-altering diseases affecting millions of Americans.

Sincerely,

Lori M.B. Laffel, M.D., M.P.H.
Chief, Pediatric and Adolescent Unit
Joslin Diabetes Center
Associate Professor of **Pediatrics**
Harvard Medical School